



World Animal Protection Official Statement
Africa-Arab Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction
October 2018 - Tunisia

1. World Animal Protection would like to salute all the delegates of Africa-Arab Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. It is an honour to have the opportunity to contribute to the debates of this Regional Platform, as we have had in the Americas in June and Mongolia in July this year.
2. The Sendai Framework has expanded our understanding regarding what is needed to reduce the risk of disasters: we must protect people, their property and health, **as well as their livelihoods and productive assets**. The Sendai Framework considers **livestock and working animals productive assets**. This means that people depend on animals for their livelihood. Africa is a great example of that. Over one billion of the world's most vulnerable to disasters rely on their livestock to recover in the aftermath.
3. Animals are sentient beings. They suffer in similar ways to humans and depend on us for protection when a disaster strikes. The suffering and loss of animals due to disasters affect our emotional wellbeing and cultural identities. They are our companions and play a major role in the lives and social structures of communities. Africa, due to the richness of her history and culture has a profound understanding of this reality.
4. It comes naturally as the next step for the countries of this region to ensure the protection of animals in disasters to ensure the protection of livelihoods. For this to happen, our key recommendation to all countries is that **animal protection must be an integral part of all national and local disaster risk reduction strategies**. The challenge at hand is not the belief of the importance of protecting animals in disasters, but rather how to operationalize it with a **variety of stakeholders** and taking the **issue of localization** into account.
5. For this reason, World Animal Protection is here today to reiterate its commitment to achieving Target E of the Sendai Framework. We firmly recognize the need for every country to have a Disaster Risk Reduction strategy. We believe that the inclusion of animal protection in Disaster Risk Reduction strategies indicates the extent to which a country has advanced in its **preparedness culture** and its understanding of the relationship between the protection of animals and the protection of livelihoods.
6. To support national governments and animal owners in the development and implementation of robust Disaster Risk Reduction strategies, we have launched the **Animals in Disasters Initiative**, an international cross-sector alliance in which World Animal Protection - along with regional organizations, other international NGOs and agencies - will assist countries in taking action to **increase preparedness** by developing



animal-inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction strategies and strengthening Disaster Risk Reduction governance from the local to the international level.

7. The inclusion of animal protection in local and national Disaster Risk Reduction strategies must be perceived and accepted as a **cross-sectoral issue to be addressed**. The **agricultural and civil defence** sectors are key stakeholders. Nonetheless, health, finance, trade, humanitarian, women and youth, science and technology, the private sector - among others - are also fundamental to address the protection of animals and livelihoods **coherently**. The ability of local and national leaders to operationalize the protection of livelihoods – through, for example, early warning systems, risk reduction capacity building, preparedness information campaigns and increasing animal resilience - depends on the strength of Disaster Risk Reduction governance to promote the collaboration and cross-pollination of ideas and approaches among all these sectors.
8. Data systems to measure the **vulnerability of animals in disasters and its impact on livelihoods** are central to any strategy to protect animals and livelihoods in disasters. Clear and standardised tracking of animal impacts informs better policy and practical decisions, and thereby allows governments to understand the direct and aggregated impacts disasters have on the livestock and other sectors.
9. We invite all delegates to attend our Market Place Booth to learn about and join the Animals in Disasters Initiative. The representatives from World Animal Protection are available throughout this Conference to offer advice on how include animal protection in Disaster Risk Reduction strategies. We wish to reiterate our commitment in assisting countries achieve Target E of the Sendai Framework and enhance their preparedness culture. We offer over 50 years of expertise in preparedness and management of animals in disasters.

Thank you.